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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Suspected smuggler crashes van full of undocumented immigrants *Thirteen people narrowly avoid serious injury*

San Diego, Calif. — The driver of a van full of undocumented immigrants lost control of his vehicle late Monday night near Alpine, hitting an embankment and rolling the vehicle onto its side.

Thirteen Mexican nationals, including a pregnant teenage girl, narrowly avoided serious injury when the driver missed a turn and flipped the vehicle on its side. The accident occurred on Highway 8 near the East Willows exit. Border Patrol agents, who had attempted to stop the vehicle earlier, arrived at the scene moments later and checked the occupants for injury. Paramedics at the scene treated one man with facial lacerations. He was taken to Kaiser Permanente Hospital for further attention and released into Border Patrol custody.

Agents at the scene, along with the Border Patrol anti-smuggling unit (ASU) and the U.S. Attorney's Office, are charging the driver of the van and two other occupants with alien smuggling and transportation of illegal aliens.

Smugglers often overload vehicles, lead immigrants through deadly terrain, and abandon individuals who fall behind. Border Patrol special units, such as the anti-smuggling unit, attempt to prevent smugglers from leading immigrants into such dangerous situations. Border Patrol officials note that this incident is another instance of the reckless disregard for safety that alien smugglers routinely demonstrate.

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